

**George Washington to Henry Riddell, March 5, 1774,
The Writings of George Washington from the Original
Manuscript Sources, 1745-1799. John C. Fitzpatrick,
Editor.**

To HENRY RIDDELL

March 5, 1774.

Sir: The Reasons which you assign for not undertaking positively to furnish me with the number, and kind of Palatines mentioned in my last Letters, I must Confess are cogent, at the sametime it obliges me, under that uncertainty, to lay aside the Scheme till I can be advised from Phila. (to which place I had written for Information previous to your first conversation with Mr. Young) of the expence and certainty attending a measure of this kind: for the disadvantage on my side, of standing bound to provide for these people if they do come, and having no certainty of receiving them is, that if any other Scheme should cast up in the mean while, I dare not embrace it, or engage Tenants singly, as they occasionally may offer; as I have no doubt of many doing, when there are Houses and fields preposed to there Lands; otherwise I might be involv'd in difficulties from which I could not easily extricate myself; but if it is necessary to you to know (on Acct. of giving the earliest Information to your Corrispondant) whether these people will be wanting, or not before I can return from Berkeley, Frederick &ca. I shall have no objections towards Importing the Numbers and kinds mentioned in my last, provided, they will come indented to me, or my Assignes in the Usual manner for four years; and be sold, if I find it my Interest to do so (as they are in Philadelphia) as common Servants, during that term. I cannot suffer much from the Uncertainty, if they are to be had upon these terms, and I see no reason why they may not or will come here as to Phila., except that the latter is the

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general rendezvous of them: It may therefore rest with you, Sir, to write immediately, or not, for Eighty or a Hundred of such kinds as I mentioned in my last, as you shall find it your Interest; and I will upon their arrival at Piscataway, pay you the Freight down; as also the contingent charges with Interest as soon after as I possibly can, in case I should not find it convenient to desposit whole sum at once.

If you should not think this project of consequence enough to the Interest of your Ship, to attempt it, I must decline the importation altogether, for the present. If on the other hand you Incline to make the experiment, I shall rely on your friend ship to recommend to the Captns. or persons who is to provide the Stores, to lay them in upon the best terms, and be governed by the customary allowance; both in respect to quantity and quality, taking care to have no stint of the first as the surplusage can be accounted for upon the delivery here, I shall add no more at present than that, I am Sir, etc.¹

¹his letter exists in contemporary copy form in the Washington Papers. The pen man has not been identified.